

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

301 State House
(317) 232-9855

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 7308

BILL NUMBER: HB 1332

DATE PREPARED: Feb 23, 2002

BILL AMENDED: Feb 21, 2002

SUBJECT: Autopsy Fees.

FISCAL ANALYST: Kathy Norris

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FUNDS AFFECTED: X **GENERAL**
DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: Local

Summary of Legislation: (Amended) This bill requires that payment for an autopsy ordered by a local health official, county coroner, or prosecuting attorney must be paid by the county in which the deceased was a resident.

Effective Date: July 1, 2002.

Explanation of Local Expenditures: (Revised) This bill would allow counties to bill for reimbursement of the cost of autopsies ordered by the coroner, prosecuting attorney, or the county health officer to be performed on individuals who did not reside in the county where they died. Currently, three counties that have an air ambulance located within the county, Marion, Allen, and Fulton counties, may bill the county where the incident that caused the individual's death occurred for the cost of the autopsy. (The air ambulance service based in Rochester is the second helicopter of the Fort Wayne-based Samaritan Service.) This bill would allow the coroners, prosecuting attorneys, and local health officers of all counties to seek reimbursement for the cost of autopsies performed on individuals who were not residents of the county that performed the autopsy.

The State Department of Health data for CY 1998 and CY 1999 reported that approximately 22% of death certificates issued with a coroner's involvement and an autopsy indicated were for individuals who were not residents of the county issuing the death certificate. About 400 cases, or 14% of the total, were for individuals who were residents of another Indiana County; and about 8% were for residents of other states.

In 1999, the State Board of Health had reports of coroner-ordered autopsies on 414 Indiana residents who were not residents of the counties where the autopsies were performed. These reports occurred before Marion County, Allen County, and Fulton County were allowed to seek reimbursement for expenses associated with the air ambulance services.

The Allen County Coroner's Office reports the cost of an autopsy to be between \$1,000 and \$1,600 depending on individual circumstances. The Indiana University Forensic Science Department, which is under contract to the Marion County Coroner, reported a similar range, although the procedures are not charged on an individual basis under the terms of the contract.

Explanation of Local Revenues: Counties would have reimbursements of expenditures equal in amounts to the expenditures incurred by the counties that are billed for services.

State Agencies Affected:

Local Agencies Affected: County coroners' offices, local prosecuting attorneys, and local county health officers.

Information Sources: State Department of Health, Epidemiology Division, Linda Stemnock, (317)-233-7536; Mr. Dick Alfeld, Allen County Coroners Office; Dr. Pless, IU Department of Forensic Science.